

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

Division of Disease Prevention (DDP)

Monthly Ebulletin



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September 2018 Edition

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Virginia (VA) AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP)

The VA ADAP announces that Walmart is now part of the Ramsell network! Starting August 1, 2018, clients can fill prescriptions from any of the 136 Walmart and 15 Sam's Club pharmacies across Virginia. Contact **Ruth Penni** at VDH if you have questions at ruth.penni@vdh.virginia.gov or (804) 864-7958. VA ADAP appreciates the negotiations by Ramsell (its Pharmacy Benefits Manager) to make this happen. These additional pharmacies reduce barriers to medication access for all people living with HIV (PLWH).

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Medicaid Expansion Update

Virginia will expand Medicaid for people ages 19-64 that have incomes at or below 138% of the Federal Poverty Level starting January 1, 2019. This means that a single adult making up to \$16,754 a year or a family of three making up to \$28,677 a year may qualify. Medicaid expansion is a great opportunity to provide quality health coverage to many Virginians who previously had no or very few options for care. It will also provide an opportunity for VA's Ryan White Part B (RWPB) program to wrap services around what Medicaid offers, so that PLWH in the state will have comprehensive care and services.

VDH and the agency that oversees Virginia Medicaid, the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS), are meeting and working together to plan for the transition of ADAP and RWPB clients who will be eligible. This collaboration between VDH and DMAS will help reach the best health outcomes for individuals and meet the goal of VA's Integrated HIV Prevention and Care Plan to reduce and prevent any new HIV infections in the state. VDH will provide updates through listservs, public meetings, social media and our website so that clients and other stakeholders have the resources and information needed to benefit from Medicaid expansion. To start, people can go to the website, [COVER VIRGINIA](#) and sign up for updates when you log on the site.

You can also learn more information about Medallion 4.0. This is the managed care program for the six insurance carriers that will provide statewide coverage and services to new adults eligible for Medicaid. When you get to the website, click on Medallion 4.0 under the **New Initiatives** section at the bottom of the webpage. It has many resources for members and providers/stakeholders. The Medallion 4.0 carriers and their plans are:

- Aetna Better Health of Virginia
- Anthem HealthKeepers Plus
- Magellan Complete Care
- Optima Health Family Care
- UnitedHealthcare Community Plan
- Virginia Premier

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DDP nPEP Protocol Released

The Division of Disease Prevention (DDP) has released its protocol for non-occupational Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (nPEP). The medication is available at no cost through DDP to Virginians who may have been exposed to HIV. Traditionally, nPEP has been given to individuals who were the victim of sexual assault. It is now available to anyone who may have been exposed regardless of the circumstances. Uninsured persons may receive the full 28 day course of treatment. Those with insurance may receive a five day supply which will allow sufficient time to obtain medication through their insurance provider. nPEP must be started within 72 hours of exposure. For more information please consult the nPEP Protocol posted online on the [PrEP/nPEP webpage](#).

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DDP Data Request Form

For those needing to request data from DDP, they may now do so electronically through the website. A new electronic [DDP Data Request Form](#) has been created to handle all data requests. The form can be accessed through the direct link or through the [Data and Reports page](#).

As always, individuals and agencies should check the website to see if the data they need already exists and is accessible before using the data request form. Those requesting data should allow one to two weeks for a request to be completed depending on the data requested. Other important notes regarding data requests can be found on the data and reports page.

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The Intersection of Hepatitis, HIV, and the Opioid Crisis: The Need for a Comprehensive Response

NASTAD recently released an [issue brief](#) about creating a comprehensive response to the intersecting issues of opioid and other drug use, hepatitis, and HIV. This brief

outlines the core elements necessary to create such a response and the evidence behind them. The nation has experienced unprecedented increases in hepatitis and HIV rates among people who use drugs over the past two decades. As communities work to respond effectively to these epidemics, NASTAD urges health departments to take a leadership role in educating policymakers, public safety leaders, community partners, and impacted communities about the core components of a comprehensive, public health approach to end these intersecting epidemics. [Read about the suggested actions](#) to combat these epidemics!

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National Disease Intervention Specialist (DIS) Recognition Day

October 5 is National DIS Recognition Day! Many thanks to all DIS around the Commonwealth who do so much “behind the scenes” work to improve the health of their respective communities. Why we celebrate:

- DIS are truly the “shoe leather” backbone of state and local STD/HIV programs.
- DIS serve a critical role in reporting and controlling the spread of STDs, HIV, TB and hepatitis.
- DIS travel many miles in their attempts to assure all patients who are infected, or have been exposed to an infection, are notified and treated.
- DIS brave unsafe conditions, work nights and weekends, and respond to additional public health crises outside of STD/HIV prevention when needed.
- DIS are silent heroes dedicated to serving the health of their communities.



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Lubricant can Increase Condom Effectiveness

Did you know that non-oil-based lubricant can increase the effectiveness of condoms, resulting in less condom breakage? Single use lubricant packs are available through the VDH Condom Distribution Program in

cases of 1,000, and are on the order forms. In addition, two types of Trustex Condom/Lube Combo packs offer a condom and lube in a single pack. Many organizations qualify for our free condoms! Both health districts and community partners are eligible for the VDH Condom Distribution Program. Organizations may now order up to 25,000 condoms each quarter (100,000 a year) and those with

multiple sites may be approved to order more. Smaller quantities of female condoms, non-latex condoms, and oral dams are also available. Do you have questions? Would you like to sign up, or do you need new order forms? If so, please contact **Beth Marschak** at elizabeth.marschak@vdh.virginia.gov or (804) 864-8008.

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PERSONNEL

Welcome

DDP welcomes **Kristen Donovan** to the position of HIV Prevention Planner. Ms. Donovan has a Master's in Public Health from the University of Iowa and most recently worked at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Department of Kinesiology and Health Sciences, and VCU's Honor College. She has extensive public health experience in substance abuse education and recovery services. She has also worked as a district epidemiologist with the Chickahominy health district and served as a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Public Health Prevention Service Fellow. She gained HIV experience as an HIV outreach worker with Johnson County Department of Public Health in Iowa City, Iowa and as a teacher in the United States Peace Corps. Kristen can be reached at (804) 864-7552 or kristen.donovan@vdh.virginia.gov.

Please welcome **Latanya Crawford**, who is our new HIV Surveillance Epidemiologist! Latanya brings a wealth of knowledge about quality improvement and how to use data to inform program and policy decisions. In her role within the Division of Disease Prevention, she will be responsible for data analysis and quality assurance of HIV surveillance data, analyzing and disseminating annual reports and data for data requests and grant applications, and coordinating efforts for the Data to Care program. Latanya can be reached at (804) 864-8040 or latanya.crawford@vdh.virginia.gov.

Transitions

HIV Surveillance welcomes **Roopa Singh** as the new Epidemiology Specialist for the Medical Monitoring Project (MMP). Roopa's first day in this role was August 10, 2018. Roopa joined the HIV Surveillance unit about a year ago as a Data Support Technician; she also worked briefly as the Routine Interstate Duplicate Review Coordinator. She holds a Master's degree in Public Health and has demonstrated experience working in public health and community outreach. DDP is excited for her to bring her skills and knowledge to MMP. Roopa can be reached at (804) 864-7594.

HIV Surveillance welcomes **Casey Merwin** as she transitions to the role of Program Manager for the MMP and for Molecular HIV Surveillance (MHS). Casey joined DDP in early 2016 as an MMP Epidemiology Specialist and was the senior MMP staff member before accepting her current position. DDP is excited for Casey to bring her skills and knowledge to her new role and continuing the important work of MMP and MHS. Casey's phone number will remain the same: (804) 864-7341.

Farewell

Kathleen Carter, Program Support Technician for DDP, retired after 26 years of state

service. Ms. Carter spent the last 15 years in the HIV Prevention Services (HPS) unit where she was key in coordinating logistics for the Community HIV Planning Committee, ensuring smooth and efficient meetings for the members. Her strong organizational skills, attention to detail and friendly, professional manner were tremendous assets to HPS and DDP. Kathleen is looking forward to spending more time with her son and granddaughter in Vermont. We wish her all the best as she enters into the next stage of her life.

SODA bids farewell to **Lark Washington**, the former syphilis case coordinator at Central Registry Unit (CRU). Lark began a Master's program at VCU studying Urban and Regional Planning. We wish her the best of luck. Alex Clark of CRU assumed her role on August 17 (alexander.clark@vdh.virginia.gov, (804) 864-8034).

Estella Obi-Tabot's last day with the HIV surveillance unit was August 10. She was an integral part of the Medical Monitoring Project (MMP) team, as well as the unit, as an Epidemiology Specialist since late 2016. She has moved on to begin graduate studies in Health Policy Management at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Estella will be greatly missed and is wished much success on her journey!

The Division of Disease Prevention mourns the loss of one of our colleagues, **Sterling Stewart**. He was a valued member of our team for over a decade as a Disease Intervention Specialist. His tireless dedication and many contributions to public health will always be remembered. Please keep his family, friends and colleagues in your thoughts as they go through this difficult time.

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